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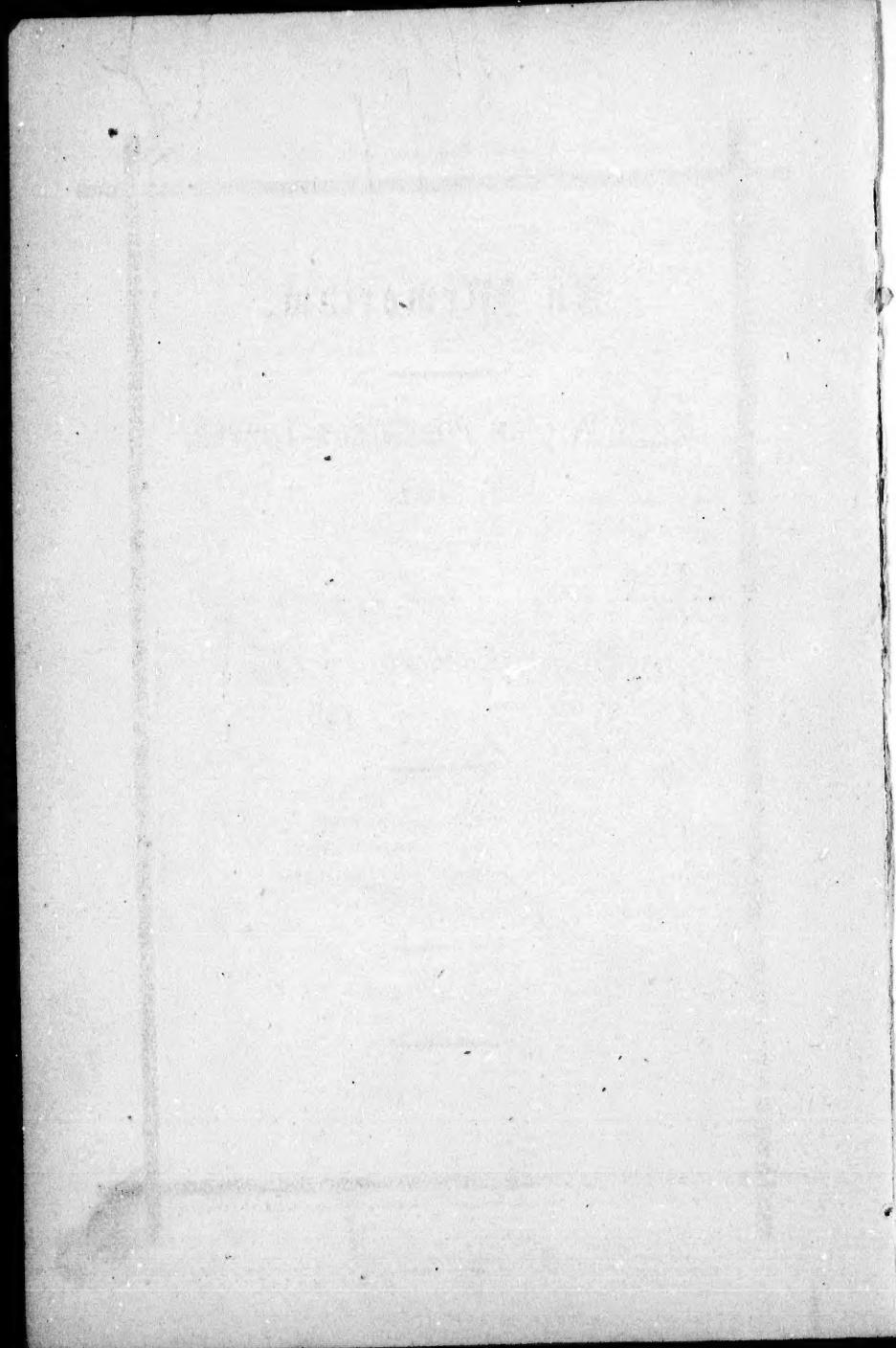


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In Memoriam.



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MARY WILSON ROBERTSON-TUPPER,

BORN:

ON EARTH,

2nd JULY, 1854.

IN HEAVEN,

7th AUGUST, 1876.

“Had God asked us, well we know
We should cry, oh! spare this blow!
Yes, with streaming tears should pray,
Lord, we love her, let her stay.”

II. Samuel XII. 22:23.

“FATHER—THY WILL BE DONE.”



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MONTREAL:

"GAZETTE" PRINTING HOUSE, NEAR THE POST OFFICE.

Funeral Service,

11th AUGUST, 1876.

ADDRESS

BY THE

Rev. William Taylor, D.D.

An apostle exhorts to weep with them that weep. The Christian religion is the only religion which makes it a duty to do so. There are frequent calls to this duty in our connection with our fellow-men; for in the life of mortal man trouble comes after trouble, as wave follows wave. "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward."

I cannot conceive of any event in which there would be a louder call to this pre-eminently christian duty

NOTE. The above address has an unusual interest, as it is related to its venerable author.

Dr. Taylor prepared it during the railway journey from Portland, on Thursday, the tenth August, while travelling with the bereaved families and the remains of their loved one. He returned to the sea-side the night of the funeral, and died at Portland on the 4th September, his own body being carried over the same road.

On Thursday, four weeks thereafter, he was followed to the grave by his sorrowing friends. It was his last composition, and its delivery was the last official act of a ministry which had all but closed its fiftieth year.

than that which has brought us together at this time, both in its own nature and in its attending circumstances.

It is our lot to witness many bereavements that are painful and afflictive ; but there are none more painful nor more inexplicable to human reason than when a young mother is unexpectedly taken away by death ; taken away in circumstances in which the human heart looks forward with hope and joy. Alas ! what sudden changes may come ; how bitterly our fondest expectations may be disappointed. Who could have imagined that the young woman who, but a few months ago, stood before us a happy bride, surrounded with all that could give presage of continued prosperity and joy, would be so soon wrapped in her winding-sheet and carried forth to the cold grave.

Nor love, nor skill, nor devoted attendance, nor earnest prayer could avert the stroke. The hour had come. The bridegroom came and called her to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

But without dwelling on what is so deeply affecting, let me remind you that this event has a bright as well as a dark side. The word of God throws light even on the tomb. And to it I would affectionately call the attention of the bereaved families, especially the bereaved husband, that it may minister to them the consolation which they need.

We know whither the departed has gone. She has

joined the company of those that are not lost but gone before. I would never have you think of her as one that is dead, that is gone out of being ; but as one that has departed to enter another apartment of our Father's house, in which there are many mansions. It is true she is separated from us by a veil through which we cannot see ; but we know that she is there ; we know that on the other side of that veil there lies the glory of Immanuel's land. "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

When we think of her Christian profession, of her meek and gentle spirit, and unostentatious consistency, we feel persuaded that however great the happiness apparently from which she was taken away so suddenly, in this world, it is not worthy to be compared with that into which she has now entered. If you cannot hold communion with her personally any longer, you may yet hold communion with her spirit, and that will raise you above the changes and trials of this vain life, and bring you into closer sympathy with the life and the joy which is eternal.

There is comfort in the belief that this is the doing of the Lord. Although it is true that He is very pitiful and of tender mercy, and this bereavement is so

afflictive that it seems to be altogether out of harmony with anything of that nature, yet we are shut up to the conclusion, that this also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. Even a sparrow does not fall to the ground without Him, how much less one whom He has redeemed with the blood of His own Son. It is His doing, and if so He must have had reasons for doing it. What these reasons might be we cannot tell; He does not give any account of His actions. Instead of giving us reasons in any particular case, He has given us His own paternal character to serve as a reason in all cases; to prove at all times a guarantee that He can never do anything inconsistent with His own love, nor the fatherly relation into which He hath entered with His people. "The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works." Let the bereaved stay themselves upon the Lord; for though He causes grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. "Wait upon the Lord, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, upon the Lord."

The death of this young woman, so deservedly beloved, gives a loud warning to us all, but specially to the young, to be ready also, for the hour of our death. She died so unexpectedly; there were so many things in her case that seemed to encourage the hope of long life, if such a hope were ever justifiable in mortal

man, that we may well feel alarmed, we may well ask, Who can be safe? there may be but a step between us and death. Are you prepared? Have you any hope? Is your hope strong enough to bear the stern encounter of the King of Terrors? Oh! that you were wise, that you understood these things, that you would consider your latter end.

There is but one way to die safely, and that is to die in the Lord. Not trusting in our own goodness, in anything that we have done, or suffered, or experienced, but always and exclusively in what Christ hath done and suffered in our stead. His blood was shed for the remission of sins unto many; and so great is its efficacy that it cleanseth from all sin. By Him all that believe are justified from all things; "neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

I beseech you to take these great and gracious words of our Lord into timely consideration; to receive them in faith, to meditate upon them, and to live under their controlling influence. Then for you to live will be Christ, and to die will be gain.

En Memoriam.

SERMON

BY THE

REV. J. S. BLACK,

ERSKINE CHURCH,

17th SEPTEMBER, 1876.

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."—ISAIAH 25:8.

There is an exquisite blending of boldness and pathos in this passage. The union of commanding force with more than womanly gentleness is an aspect of the Divine nature and character in which prophet and apostle take much delight. Strength has a natural tendency to become rude and brutal;—gentleness has a natural tendency to become long-suffering unto weakness and indulgence. The harmonious union of the two lies at the foundation of the best type of chivalrous manhood. Their union in perfection can only be ascribed to Him who is the Captain of our salvation, the Lord strong and mighty in battle; and the innocent, the uncomplaining, the all-tender,

the Lamb of God. The hand that grasps the sword can also lead the little ones. "The strength of His holy arm" is a very significant expression.

The two-fold action of our text, the conquering of the enemy, and the consoling of the bleeding heart, stand out as distinct and yet companion pictures. "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us";—He is our leader;—under His blessed guidance we have overcome one by one the foes within and the foes without. Envy, hate, revenge; pride, greed, selfishness, and all the other foes that war against the soul have been overcome, and we stand face to face with the last enemy. He is mighty who saves. He swallows up death in victory, for death becomes but the gate of life. There is another picture. We have not come through this dire conflict altogether scathless. The woes of death have encompassed us, and its sorrows are upon us. But the conqueror is also the consoler. The everlasting arms are round about us. The hand that grappled with death now wipes the tears away, for even the shadow of sorrow must not fall on Heaven our home. Burns tells us that he could not read this verse without being affected to tears.

This chapter is a song in anticipation of deliverance from Babylon. With the prophet, faith had become sight, and he could rejoice before the event. But this hymn is more;—it contemplates another de-

liverance, another victory, even the reign of grace on earth, and the resurrection glory.

Sometimes there exists a reasonable doubt as to the accuracy of our interpretation of prophecy, and as to the propriety of spiritualising the inspired utterance by the direct application of it to Christ and to the Christian life. We are saved from the conjecture in the present case by the use which New Testament writers have made of these words. Paul, in I Cor. 15:54, distinctly affirms that the victory of our text will only be fully accomplished by the resurrection of the body, and John, in his vision of the new heaven and the new earth, declares: Rev. 21:4 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things shall pass away."

The great lesson of our text—as it occurs in the old prophet, and repeated as it is in part by Paul and John—is the recognition of sorrow and suffering as being part of our portion here. The ills of life are a part of life. Adversity is not an accident, it is a necessity. This word adversity is very expressive, it means that habit that things have of turning the wrong way, of going against us, of disappointing us. By modern usage we are inclined to apply it to disastrous worldly affairs only, but it is equally applicable to all the ills of life.

We have all heard of, or read of, or felt the discipline of sorrow. He who knows most of the human heart, inspiration excepted, says, "Sweet are the uses of adversity." Lord Bacon, in a brief essay, has uttered many exceedingly wise words on this theme. A few of his sentences we cannot forbear quoting;—they say so much in such small space, and say it so well.—"Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favour. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes, and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries, it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground;—judge, therefore, the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

While we grant that all this is true, and that much more might be said with equal propriety about the gracious ends which adversity serves, it nevertheless

remains that however much we may be persuaded and convinced as to the beneficial effects of sorrow's cup, we must shrink from it. The mere knowledge of the healing virtue of the nauseous drug can never make it agreeable to the palate. Though a loving hand holds the chalice, its contents are not thereby deprived of their bitterness. Death is a real evil,—the king of terrors. Even as tears are fitting emblems of all human woe, death is the climax of adversity.

Behold, then, the rich comfort and promise of our text. Death is not only to be abolished, it is to be swallowed up in victory;—and the Lord God shall wipe away the tears.

Sorrowful children, and sometimes children of a larger growth sub themselves to sleep. "Kind nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," lays gentle hands upon them. The wrinkles are smoothed from the brow of care, the lines which the ploughshare of grief has made gradually become less and less distinct. After a time of fitful unrest, like a calm succeeding the last irregular storm gusts, deep sleep comes. In its train sleep brings rest and pleasant dreams. The lips are wreathed with smiles, but the marks of the tears are there, not only telling their tale of past sorrow, but also sad prophecy of the care that will come with waking hours. When God gives rest to His own he wipes the tears away, not only is their joy abiding, but the very traces of the suffering past must disappear.

A good ship lies motionless in port. In its lines beauty and strength are combined and it rests the eye to look upon it. But closer inspection reveals yawning seams and strained timbers which tell of the war of elements, with here and there a shot hole reminding us of the storm of battle. Even so, many an old age, after safely passing through the turmoil and sin and burden and heat of the day, is leavened by grace, and glides very calmly into the eventide repose of waiting for God. But, look closely, the marks of the sins are still there. Sins forgiven leave their stains and memories. In glory the stains are washed away, and the memories no longer can produce the shade of sadness or the blush of shame.

These considerations ought to be very precious to us now, for after a time in which our death rate, as a congregation, has been very low, we have been brought face to face with life's last ill under circumstances calculated to startle the most thoughtless. Our Services last Sabbath were in memorial of him who for so long a time was the official head of this congregation. Since the vacation season has commenced one family has had to mourn the loss of a beloved little one, while from another, in a good old age, one of the oldest members and one of the few original members of this church was taken, and even now two others in middle life are seemingly beyond human aid.

But I wish more particularly to refer to the loss of one of whom I would have spoken ere this, but for my desire to wait until the Sabbath School Teachers were present. Mrs. Tupper's death is the first break in the ranks of the Sunday School workers since the commencement of my present ministry. Humanly speaking, there was very much that was sad and inexplicable in her death. Taken away with the fresh bloom of her young life upon her; snatched from the midst of much present comfort and prospective happiness;—we can only stand still because the Lord has done it. If her life had been a beautiful but an idle life we might have trembled at the thought of His words, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground." But we all knew her quiet zeal as a christian; her unostentatious and unwearied labours in the Sabbath School; her value to her more immediate family relations, and to all her friends.

Such a death as hers would drive us to wretched materialism, or would make us altogether mistake the character of God, were it not that our text, bright as the lightning yet sweet as glory, sends a radiance into the grave, and illumines the dark confines of the tomb. Her death has been swallowed up in victory.

There was much sorrow in her death;—much sorrow for her,—a motherless babe, a desolate husband, and loved ones absent. She had to go down into the dark valley crowned with triple care. But we can

stand by her grave, and like those who stood by our Lord's tomb and beheld not the dead, but the shining ones in life, so we by faith can see her a radiant immortal, her tears wiped away by God's own hand.

By brief absence she had been parted from her family and from the Church and Sabbath School, but in every sense she was one of us, and we mourn her as our dead. Sabbath School teachers, let her life and her death be at once encouragement and warning. We stand at the close of our holiday season, and at the beginning of another year of Sunday School work, but you may not all teach until the end of the year. Be very earnest now in winning those souls for Christ. Are there some here whom she taught? Will you meet her in glory?

To all let a lesson come. This text has more than consolation in it; there is also warning—most solemn admonition. There are many of the young who have not given their hearts to God. Death has been brought near to us as a congregation, very near indeed. The young and beautiful have not been spared. Be ye also ready. Be ready in the exercise of a living faith; be ready in the spirit of consecration; be ready in daily diligence in well-doing.

We have many pleasant recollections of our departed friend: her gentle kindness, her winning grace, her willing helpfulness; but now that she is no more, we do most fondly cherish the remembrance of her

simple faith and trust in the Saviour and her cheerful religious work. Our pleasantest remembrances of the beloved dead are not those things which can only remind us of their dead past, but those considerations which link us to their living present. A believer only can have the rejoicing in hope which brings joy out of mourning. Are you heirs of this salvation? One with her, and with all who have fallen asleep in Jesus?

